

CIVIL WAR CENTENNIAL

December 6, 1960
[No. 3382]

**By the President of the United States
of America****A Proclamation**

The years 1961 to 1965 will mark the one-hundredth anniversary of the American Civil War.

That war was America's most tragic experience. But like most truly great tragedies, it carries with it an enduring lesson and a profound inspiration. It was a demonstration of heroism and sacrifice by men and women of both sides who valued principle above life itself and whose devotion to duty is a part of our Nation's noblest tradition.

Both sections of our now magnificently reunited country sent into their armies men who became soldiers as good as any who ever fought under any flag. Military history records nothing finer than the courage and spirit displayed at such battles as Chickamauga, Antietam, Kenesaw Mountain, and Gettysburg. That America could produce men so valiant and so enduring is a matter for deep and abiding pride.

The same spirit on the part of the people at home supported and strengthened those soldiers through four years of great trial. That a Nation which contained hardly more than thirty million people, North and South together, could sustain six hundred thousand deaths without faltering is a lasting testimonial to something unconquerable in the American spirit. And that a transcending sense of unity and larger common purpose could, in the end, cause the men and women who had suffered so greatly to close ranks once the contest ended and to go on together to build a greater, freer, and happier America must be a source of inspiration as long as our country may last.

By a joint resolution approved on September 7, 1957 (71 Stat. 626), the Congress established the Civil War Centennial Commission to prepare plans and

programs for the nationwide observances of the one-hundredth anniversary of the Civil War, and requested the President to issue proclamations inviting the people of the United States to participate in those observances.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER, President of the United States of America, do hereby invite all of the people of our country to take a direct and active part in the Centennial of the Civil War.

I request all units and agencies of government—Federal, State, and local—and their officials to encourage, foster, and participate in Centennial observances. And I especially urge our Nation's schools and colleges, its libraries and museums, its churches and religious bodies, its civic, service, and patriotic organizations, its learned and professional societies, its arts, sciences, and industries, and its informational media, to plan and carry out their own appropriate Centennial observances during the years 1961 to 1965; all to the end of enriching our knowledge and appreciation of this momentous chapter in our Nation's history and of making this memorable period truly a Centennial for all Americans.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the United States of America to be affixed.

DONE at the City of Washington this sixth day of December in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and [SEAL] sixty, and of the Independence of the United States of America the one hundred and eighty-fifth.

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER

By the President,

CHRISTIAN A. HERTER,
Secretary of State.